

ARIS Reports Training: Case Study

Focusing Questions

1. What decisions were made by educators at this school?
2. When did these educators make decisions based on what you would consider to be a sound use of data? When did these educators make decisions based on what you would consider to be a poor use of data?

Context

Future Leaders Academy has 350 students from grade 6 through grade 12. On their 2008-2009 Quality Review, the school received a Proficient rating. An excerpt from the summary reads, “Data is used very well to identify students’ strengths and weaknesses. It is also used well to make organizational decisions to ensure the curriculum is challenging, exciting, and appropriate to student needs. Regular reviews identify whether students are making effective progress. Good differentiated professional development supports teachers to ensure they have the skills and expertise to implement any curricular changes. However, the school does not always make more use of data and student self-assessment to identify whether students are making the best possible progress.”

In a recent conversation with the principal, he mentioned that they are moving from one inquiry team—composed primarily of coaches and an AP—to many teams. He has heard from his coaches—who are helping to facilitate the new network of teams—that a lot of teacher teams are struggling with selecting a subgroup of students to study and an appropriate skill focus. You visit this school and attend one teacher team meeting in mid-October, a ninth grade ELA meeting, that the principal feels is fairly typical for their staff.

Vignette

“Let’s get started,” explains Annette, the Literacy coach. She shows you an ARIS report she printed (see Figure 1). The other teachers have copies as well. “Last time we took a look at how our students in grades 6, 7, 8, and 9, and performed on the ELA exam the previous year. We realized that the group of students we have this year is especially challenging academically. I also drilled down by clicking on that orange Level 2 bar and printed a table of all of our 2s.” She hands you the list (see Figures 2 and 3) and you note that the other teachers have the same list.

““It’s gotta be the writing,” one teacher named Mark explains. “My students did terribly on their baselines. I made a stacked bar chart of their scores and it appears that they really struggle with organizing their thoughts. I think we should study writing this year.” He pushes a sheet of paper across the table toward you (see Figure 4). “My kids can read, but they barely did any writing in the eighth grade. That’s why these kids can’t get 3s—they don’t know how to organize their thinking to respond to a question!”

Pam, another ninth grade teacher, jumps in. “I think about Joshua and Destiny. They talk all period long and still get 3s, and Domingo works so hard and still gets a 2.”

“But aren’t we supposed to think about what all these kids have in common?” Audrey, the other teacher at the table, interjects.

“They can’t write,” Mark sighs.

Audrey sets her list of Level 2s down, “I have a lot of these 2s—Cameron, Jeanette, Timmy—who are so bright and I bet they could get a 3. I bet they just need some work on inference and critical thinking. There’s a ton of those

sorts of questions on the Regents, so that's a major need. I have been noticing they can do literal recall well but fall totally silent during a class discussion when they're asked to think critically about a text. Pam, remember how we did the after school book club last year? We could do something like that for these kids."

Pam exclaims, "That sounds like a great idea."

Mark chimes in, "As long as there's a writing component."

Audrey comments, "Well, we have to choose a group of students and a skill, right? I say we each pick six or seven Level 2s in our classes, 2s that have been 2s for at least two years. And we focus on analytical skills. Will that work, Annette?"

"Sounds good to me," she replies. The team goes on to select a group of twenty students from the table of State exam scores.

Notes/Reflections:

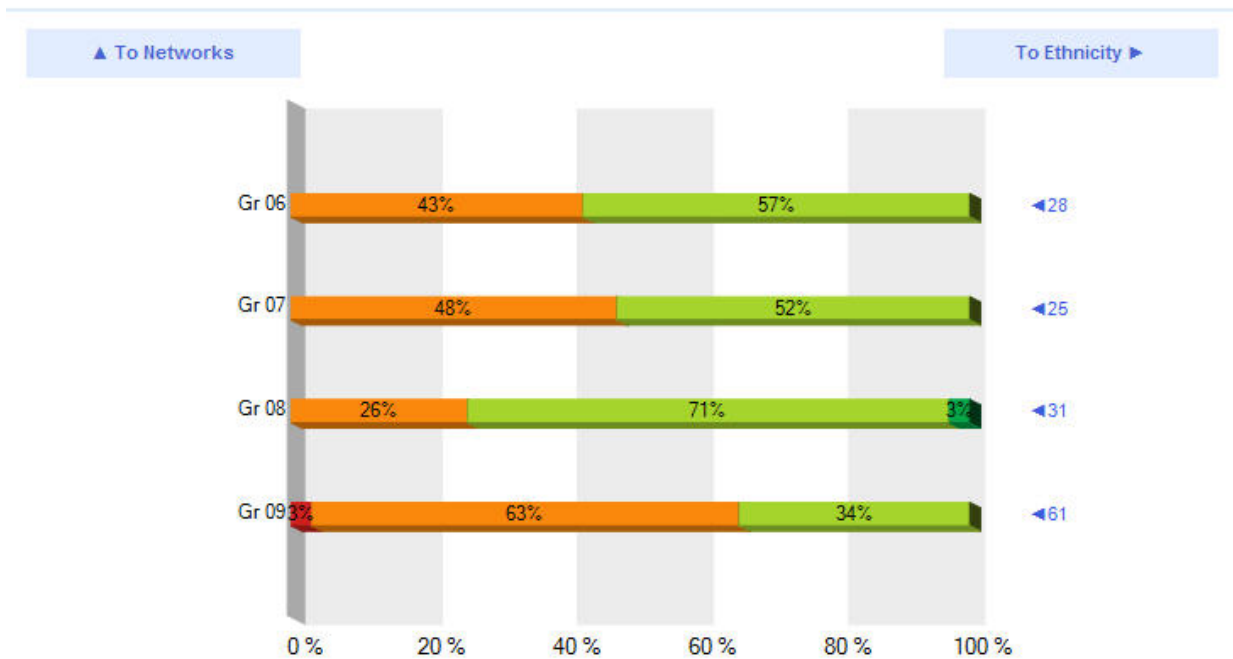


Figure 1: NYS ELA Scores by Grade Level

				3-8 ELA NY State		
				Overall		
Student Name	Grade	Year	Period	Levels	Raw Score	Scale Score
Aguilar, Kristin	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	22	627
Benson, Tonya	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	16	612
Bowman, Domingo	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	29	644
Chase, Maria	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	16	612
Cochran, Sidney	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	26	637
Colon, Ida	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	20	622
Elliott, Andre	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	23	630
Estrada, Vicky	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	25	634
Garza, Krista	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	14	606
Greene, Wilson	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	24	632
Harvey, Marion	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	22	627
Hopkins, Forrest	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	28	642
Jones, Randolph	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	23	630
Jordan, Patsy	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	15	609
Kelly, Cameron	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	22	627

Figure 2: Table of Level 2 Students (part 1)

				3-8 ELA NY State		
				Overall		
<u>Student Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Levels</u>	<u>Raw Score</u>	<u>Scale Score</u>
Kennedy, Barbara	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	29	644
Kirk, Fannie	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	18	617
Knight, Bryant	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	20	622
Lopez, Tim	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	28	642
Mendoza, Raul	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	26	637
Molina, Kim	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	19	620
Morrison, Alicia	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	26	637
Mullins, Annie	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	25	634
Nash, Deborah	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	23	630
Reyes, Ronda	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	30	647
Reynolds, Tamara	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	22	627
Robertson, Deborah	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	19	620
Rowe, Timmy	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	30	647
Soto, Mable	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	26	637
Stephens, Jeanette	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	24	632
Stone, Rolando	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	27	639
Taylor, Ana	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	15	609
Vargas, Darlene	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	25	634
Wagner, Sylvia	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	28	642
Washington, Michele	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	26	637
Watkins, Grace	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	28	642
Webster, Elvira	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	25	634
Wolf, Florence	09	'08-'09	(Annual)	Level 2	13	602

Figure 3: Table of Level 2 Students (part 2)

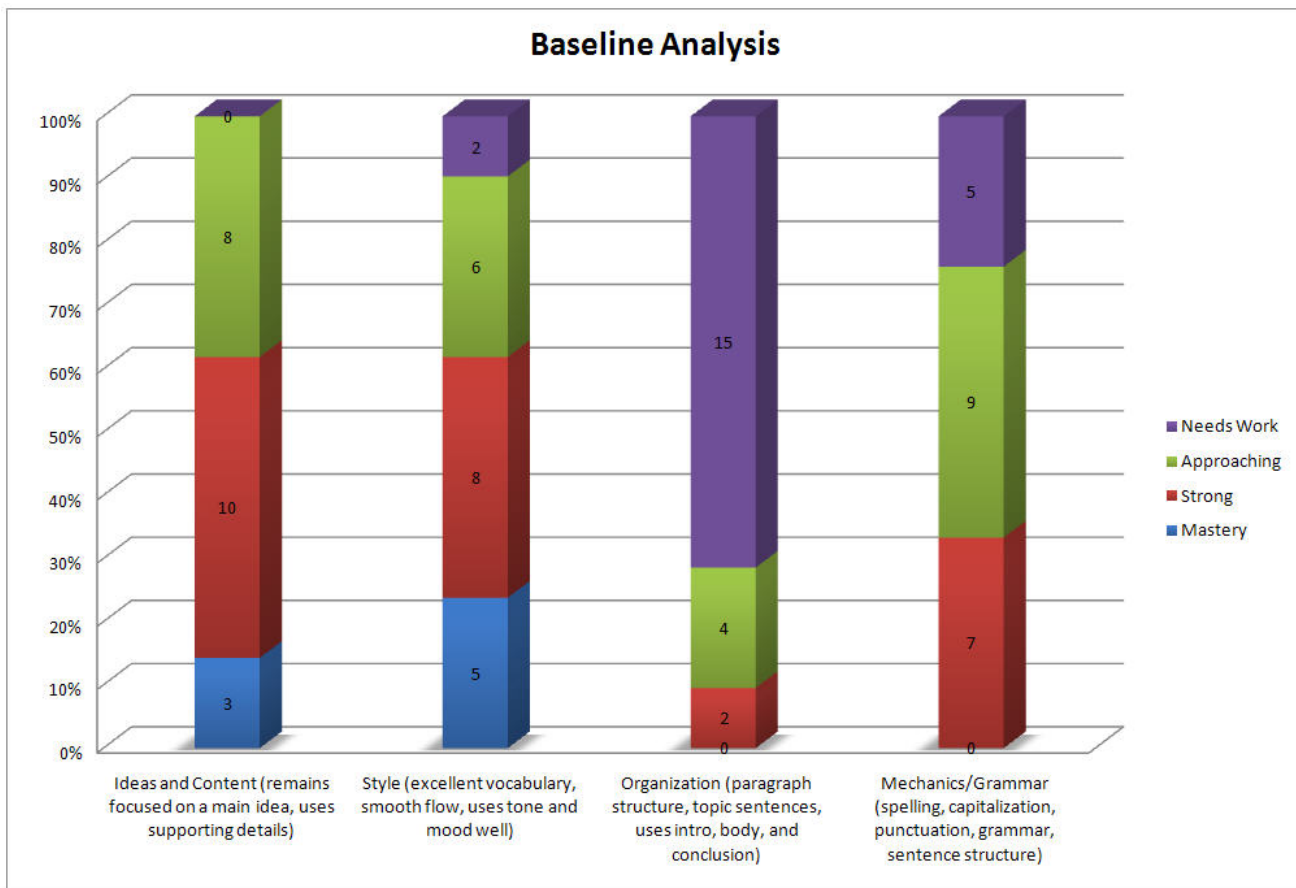


Figure 4: Mark’s Baseline Analysis (not an ARIS Report, his own graph produced in Excel)